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CULTURAL PLURALISM AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

A UNESCO INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF SPECIALISTS
HELD IN CALGARY, ALBERTA, CANADA,
FROM JUNE 13 TO 17, 1977

REPORT

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CULTURAL PLURALISM AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

A Unesco international meeting of specialists
held in Calgary, Alberta, Canada,
from June 13 to 17, 1977.

REPORT

Louise Rohonczy
Rapporteur

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INTRODUCTION

The Calgary meeting on Cultural Pluralism and National Identity was organised by the Canadian Commission for Unesco in the context of Unesco's continuing interest in cultural policy and cultural rights. As stated by the Canadian Commission for Unesco, the aims of the meeting were practical; the purpose was "to formulate recommendations or propose guidelines that would be useful to those who have to make decisions in situations presenting problems arising from cultural pluralism".

Those who hoped for some master recipes or "strategies for dealing with linguistic minorities" will be disappointed in the results of the meeting. The questions under discussion were broad, and the participants came from such a variety of cultures that one could hardly expect particular solutions for country "x" or problem "y" to emerge.

However, through the sharing of experiences and ideas, a number of problems and questions were clarified and some approaches at least, were suggested.

The suggestions for further study and action were not adopted by the meeting. They were made by individual participants during the meeting and simply recorded by the rapporteur. In some cases, the rapporteur has taken the liberty of formulating a recommendation when the tone of the discussion seemed to warrant it. The Statement (Appendix I) was adopted but not, in the opinion of the rapporteur with whole-hearted unanimity (See page 9 .)

DEFINITION

The working definition of culture proposed to the meeting was one which had been devised by a group of specialists for the Canadian Commission for Unesco.

> *"Culture is a dynamic value system of learned elements, with assumptions, conventions, beliefs and rules permitting members of a group to relate to each other and to the world, to communicate and to develop their creative potential."*

In the opening discussion the usual difficulties over the definition of this elusive concept arose almost immediately. While there was not general disagreement, it rapidly became obvious that there was not going to be unanimous agreement on the definition either.

After struggling with it for some time, the group finally agreed to set aside the problem of definition and approach the questions before them in a practical way — i.e., via the practical meaning of culture to the people and groups whom cultural policies affect.

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They went on to compare and discuss the "national experiences" of the various participants under the headings of language, work, education and access to cultural expression. Although these elements are generally separated for purposes of agendas and discussions it was obvious that when we are dealing with the problems of real life, they are always closely related, if not inseparable.

It rapidly became manifest also that the basic questions under discussion were those of human rights (including the rights of cultural groups) and the use and abuse of power — in other words of "man's inhumanity to man".

CULTURAL SECURITY AND CULTURAL COEXISTENCE

Although the term itself was not frequently used, much of the discussion turned on the notion of cultural security. This referred both to the psychological and emotional need for people to feel at home or comfortably rooted in their culture, and to their right to be educated, to work and to develop within their own culture. It was a basic assumption of most participants that these needs and rights were fundamental to the well-being and development of the human species. This does not imply that any person or group should be bound by a particular culture; on the contrary, they should be free to develop, to transform or to transcend their culture. In order to develop and evolve in a healthy manner, however, cultural groups need to be acquainted with their roots and with their heritage. The renewal of cultural identity was seen as vital, particularly when groups have been uprooted, (by immigration for instance) or alienated (through conquest and colonisation).

This need for cultural security is accompanied and countered by the necessity, in the modern world, for cultural coexistence, both within and across national boundaries.

Cultural coexistence was not, however, viewed as a static goal. It was repeatedly pointed out that cultural pluralism is a dynamic situation, in which the various groups borrow from each other, and can hopefully interact and evolve in such a way that they will "create new seeds, new flowers", as Professor Wong put it.

Two main sources of difficulty in the relations among cultural groups emerged in the course of the discussions 1) imbalances in power relationships, and 2) problems of communication. As Dr. Wojciechowski put it "The strong is the enemy of the weak". This does not imply a value judgement on any cultural groups (i.e. weak as "good" or "bad") but means simply that any group that is in a position to dominate another will invariably and often unconsciously do so, and will furthermore resist any change in this status quo.

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The cultural privileges of dominant groups, the cultural "models" they impose, constitute real hinderances to the rights and cultural expression of minorities. Further, cultural differences create barriers of varying dimensions and complexity between groups. These difficulties are most acute when groups have very different modes of thought or world views.

These two elements were present in all the "problem situations" discussed by the participants, and were seen to reinforce each other.

After examining various situations of cultural friction or conflict involving "dominant vs dominated" groups, participants were led to observe that, even setting aside questions of competition and power, serious difficulties arose when people of different cultures tried to interact. These barriers can become virtually insurmountable when the groups involved have radically different world views.

It is obvious that the Native Peoples of North America have suffered, are suffering in the most acute way, all the difficulties and cultural insecurity of a dominated group. Nonetheless, as Miss Marule described their endless problems in coping with the white man's world and ways of thinking, it was manifest that even if there were good-will and good intentions on both sides, the communications gap would be very difficult to overcome.

Another striking illustration of this point was a description by Dr. Wong of the situation of immigrant Chinese women seeking psychiatric help in the U.S. When and if they are driven to seek psychiatric help, which they do with great reluctance, the cultural barrier has meant that the doctors and nurses, despite their good faith, have been of little help. Because of their gentleness and submissiveness in following doctor's orders, these women are seen as ideal patients. What the American health personnel had failed to perceive was that these cultural characteristics, submissiveness and passivity, were a good part of the cause of the pain and difficulty these women had in adapting. What would have helped them more was a course of assertiveness training so that they could cope with the rough and tumble of life in New York City,

In the background paper Working Definition of Culture for the Canadian Commission for Unesco*, a distinction is made between culture and Culture. Large "C" Culture is more concerned with things universal in scope — symbolic representations, the arts etc., while small "c" culture is basically the way people go about things in everyday life and social relations — much of which is unconscious and communicated non-verbally. It is so much a part of them that they fail to see how their behaviour differs from that of other cultures, until such awareness is forced upon them.

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* A Working Definition of Culture for the Canadian Commission for Unesco. Ottawa, Canadian Commission for Unesco, 1977. "Occasional Paper No. 26".

Participants spoke of the "painfulness of being different" which is experienced by minority or dominated groups in a society. This "painfulness" or "cultural insecurity" is experienced at the level of small c culture. It is felt to greater or lesser degree by most people who find themselves in a new cultural context, but is more acute when the group is in a minority and/or inferior position in the society. In such a situation the painfulness is aggravated by the lack of recognition of cultural rights, by the privileged position of other groups, and sometimes also by policies based on racial prejudice. Efforts to allow for or promote real pluriculturalism were seen as efforts to remove this pain and insecurity. Such efforts were regarded as a moral obligation of the strong toward the weak, and ultimately as a political necessity, if serious conflict is to be avoided.

LANGUAGE

As indicated earlier, the group emphasized that language questions are inextricably bound up with questions of participation in social and economic institutions. Language rights often become the symbolic issue for groups which are in an inferior economic situation. This is logical enough as such groups are frequently in the position of having to learn a language other than their own simply to survive in the society in which they find themselves. In many cases they cannot acquire even the most elementary education in their mother tongue.

In these circumstances people learn a language under duress, in "conditions of deprivation" as Dr. Varese put it. The Quechua speakers of Peru for instance, are obliged to communicate with the dominant Spanish-speaking culture in a language in which they simply cannot think. This leads to the pathological situation of diglossia.

In the discussion on language learning there emerged what Professor Brazeau characterized as "the elitist versus the humanist point of view". The meeting did not come to a final agreement in favour of the one or the other.

It was pointed out that there are, as a matter of historical circumstance, certain dominant languages in the world. Others are more or less rich and vital, while others are definitely weak. Speakers of local or impoverished languages will always be severely limited in their possibilities and horizons, unless they learn another language which will give them access to a larger world of ideas and opportunities. Bilingualism or multilingualism are therefore a tool for cultural and economic development, and the way out of a cultural ghetto. In this sense learning languages can only be an advantage.

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Proponents of the "humanist" point of view acknowledged the truth of these proposals, but pointed out that it is one thing to learn a second and third language as an enrichment; it is quite a different matter to be forced to learn a foreign language because you cannot survive with dignity in your own. Those who have the advantages of a better education may very well learn languages, but it is not right to insist that a poorer, less educated group be bilingual in the dominant language in order to participate in social and economic institutions. Such circumstances will sooner or later lead to conflict. Therefore as stated by Professor Djait it is vital to overcome, to eliminate the dichotomy of "superior" vs "inferior" language (langue méprisante et langue méprisée) in the societies where this dichotomy exists.

Participants seemed to agree also that the way in which one is exposed to other languages is crucial, for if people are secure in their mother tongue, new languages can be seen as an advantage, not an imposition. Political wisdom would thus accord first priority to assuring security in the mother tongue, and then to arranging the situation so that additional languages are seen as a positive acquisition.

EDUCATION

The discussions under this heading were again concerned with cultural security and coexistence.

Many illustrations were given of adverse, alienating effects of the educational systems imposed on colonised peoples or minority groups; these systems tend to reproduce and reaffirm the socio-economic status quo of a society. Once again these effects were seen as more or less serious depending on whether the world view transmitted by the educational system differed more or less widely from the world view of any given cultural group.

Miss Marule spoke, for instance, of the disastrous impact of the white man's educational system on the North American native peoples, imposed as it was complete with alien language, history, religion, political system, social customs, etc. Not least of the problems was the imposition of a written system on a people of oral tradition. The result has been cultural confusion and alienation.

In a rare excursion away from the "ethnic" considerations of the meeting, Mr. Wagner described the alienation vis à vis the educational system which is to be found in working class milieu. The school drop-out rate among working class students is excessively high, posing the problem of an institution transmitting cultural values foreign to the students'

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milieu. Paradoxically, where the "middle-class" system succeeds, the working class loses. Students who are successful in school become upwardly mobile and join the middle class.

Being generally ethnocentric — i.e. the vehicles of the values of the dominant cultural group — education systems usually fail also to impart to children any real understanding of other cultures. When students are taught about other cultural groups it is generally in a smattering and superficial way. Thus (in North America at least) children learn about the Japanese tea ceremony and Ukrainian Easter Egg painting. "Artistic" cultural stereotypes are thus created in the minds of children and no real insight into the other culture is provided. Furthermore, teaching about other cultures generally emphasizes and underlines cultural differences, instead of encouraging the acceptance of cultural variety and difference as normal and commonplace.

A number of suggestions were made on how to solve these problems (see Recommendations). They involved principally decentralisation and de-ethnicization of educational systems. Decentralisation would allow cultural communities who so wished to formulate their own programs of education. "De-ethnicization" would allow the cultural heritage of each group to be valorised in the eyes of its children, and cultural variety and change within a society to be viewed in a positive way.

As indicated elsewhere, some participants were not favourable to a very great degree of decentralisation in decision making. However, most seemed to agree that a child's education should at least begin with his native world view (including language) in order to provide the basis for a secure cultural identity.

SYNERGY, EMPATHY AND THE CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM

Dr. Esser suggested an interesting model for analysing the inter-relationship of individuals, groups and societies. This consists in looking at the development and operations of societies in terms of the development of the central nervous system.

The "basic brain" is situated in the brain stem and takes care of our vital functions, most of them quite unconsciously. According to the proposed model, the counterpart of the brain stem in society is the economic infrastructure, which we take for granted and which makes life in society possible. The second part of the central nervous system, less old than the brain stem and serving as a border between it and the cortex, is the limbic system, the emotional brain. This system gives us the ability to experience pleasure and displeasure and to make choices. The social counterpart to the limbic system is government. The third part of the brain

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is the cortex, which deals with intellectual functioning. Its environmental counterpart is science, technology and religion. The cortex is best seen as a tool, a verbal extension of the brain stem and limbic system, which are non-verbal and non-rational. In a healthy person or society, the systems are balanced. A disturbed person has no control over his emotional life; when a people has no control over its government, one can consider the society to be "disturbed".

Esser contrasted the non-verbal, non-rational brain stem and limbic system (economic infrastructure and government) with the rational cortex (intellectual products, science, religion, etc.) and called the conflicts between the basic and decision making levels and the intellectual level of society "social pollution". As an example, he cited the discrimination against the Hutterites in Alberta (Canada). On the religious (cortical) level, this sect is unobjectionable. In fact, their moral virtues are admirable. However, they did not fit into the political process of Alberta and on the economic level they posed a threat, in that their thrift and hard work enabled them to buy up large quantities of land. The hostile reaction to the Hutterites was thus instinctive and non-rational.

Another example of social pollution, this time at the cortical level, is the "pure reliance on science as the salvation for mankind". The Western veneration of reason and logic ignores the fact that these are only tools, and that in a healthy society, balance and harmony is required among the three brain (societal) levels.

The three brain levels operate synergically, as do the three societal levels. Synergy signifies the interaction of two or more substances, wherein the actions of each substance can be either diminished (negative synergy) or increased (positive synergy) by the other substance, beyond what each substance can do for itself. In a healthy individual or society there is positive synergy; instances of "social pollution" are examples of negative synergy. As an example of positive synergy, Dr. Esser cited the Indonesian custom of Musjwara described by Dr. Kandou. This is the custom of talking among opposing parties in order to achieve a consensus over a problem, without forcing a particular view-point. If no consensus is reached, the discussion is dropped, to be resumed at a later date with new propositions and arguments.

Cooperation and understanding among the three brain levels will provide positive synergy in the individual; similarly, cooperation among the economic, governmental and intellectual levels will produce positive synergy in a society. In order to achieve this positive synergy in a multicultural context, Dr. Esser maintained, we need empathy; that is, the identification with and the intellectual understanding of the needs (biological level) feelings (limbic level) and thoughts (cortical level) of the other person, or cultural group. He pointed out that empathy must be distinguished from sympathy, which is just the sharing of feelings with other people. Empathy, as an intellectual, cortical, function, does more

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than feel for the other; it understands him completely, and can therefore develop the foresight to do something for him. If the empathy is reciprocal, then there is mutual reinforcement between the individuals or groups. Once empathy is achieved, it can set synergy in motion in the society.

For this reason, Dr. Esser felt that we must teach children what empathy is, at the earliest opportunity. Basically, this means that we must make children understand that science, technology, the arts are only tools by which we accomplish the purpose, but that the purpose is determined by our needs and feelings, the policy-making parts of our brains and the government of our society.

NATIONAL IDENTITY AND THE STATE

The concepts of national identity and the state were not examined in any great depth. It was nonetheless obvious (and no doubt inevitable, considering the national backgrounds represented around the table), that strong differences of opinion existed among the participants. The only point of agreement seemed to be a recognition of the growing role of the state in cultural matters.

For many the logical consequences of choosing or encouraging cultural pluralism would seem to be an increasingly decentralized state. It was repeatedly suggested that various groups should have the power to determine their own type of education, their own forms of economic and social participation. The state was spoken of as "enabler", rather than formulator and implementor of policies. Several participants noted that cultural problems often spring from the superimposition of a State on several nations (peoples); to what extent is the unity of the State compatible with the existence — and more important, the recognition-of the rights, of these nations? The possibility of the eventual "withering away of the state" was mentioned only once, but it nonetheless lurked behind the interventions, so to speak, all through the meeting. It was pointed out on one occasion that we tend to regard the state as sacred, eternal, and greatly to fear threats to its unity, albeit the nation-state as we know it is a relatively new phenomenon.

On the other hand, it was clearly stated that for a good number of countries the prime concern was that of developing or forging a national identity out of a pluralist situation, rather than encouraging pluralism in a supposedly or actually unified state. Professor Ojha expressed reservations about using the term "cultural pluralism", and preferred to speak of the larger unit — the country — and what was happening within it. Others felt that the government should supervise cultural development and expression, so that they should not conflict with the aims of the society as a whole.

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These differences on the question of national integration emerged very clearly at the very end of the meeting, in the discussion on the last three clauses of the final statement. There was debate, for instance, as to whether national identity should be conceived of in terms of unity in diversity or union in diversity. In discussing the two final clauses, several participants definitely wished to see a reference to national integration in the text, whereas others thought that this was a mistake, as national integration is too often achieved through repression. Others again thought that the present text was preferable as it left the door open for as much or as little integration as each state thought desirable.

A number of variations in the text were proposed, none agreed upon. In the end the text was approved as it now stands. In the opinion of the rapporteur, however, this represented more of a compromise, a graceful agreement to disagree, than a real consensus.

NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF CULTURAL IDENTITY

While cultural security and freedom were seen as basic human rights and prerequisites for the healthy development of individuals and groups, the participants frequently emphasized the other side of the coin - the divisive and imprisoning aspects of cultural identity. This was illustrated in a number of ways.

Culture is obviously a prison to those deprived of the right to live, work and express themselves in and through their culture; those who must learn other languages and adapt to other thought modes and world views in order simply to survive. The consequences are all too well illustrated by the wretched social and psychological condition of certain minority groups and colonized peoples.

Participants also warned, against self imposed prisons: against groups using cultural differences as weapons to cut themselves off from other cultural contacts and the larger world. They spoke of the "rites of passage" from one culture to another, of the need for exchanges between cultures and for people to participate in cultures other than their own.

They mentioned also the dangers of stereotyping groups, who can then find themselves locked into certain cultural and social roles. For instance, because the American Negro is musical or a good athlete, because the French-Canadian is "creative", these groups have been encouraged and supported in these fields; but the complement to this encouragement has often been exclusion from other social and economic opportunities.

There was not entire agreement, however, as to where the line should be drawn between legitimate claims for cultural rights and the self-imprisoning use of cultural identity. This was illustrated in the debate over language learning, with some maintaining that learning other languages was necessarily an enrichment and others stating that in many circumstances groups had the legitimate claim to be educated and to work in their own language.

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Dr. Freeman noted that cultural identity could become so narrow and intense as to impede the development of more broadly humanistic values and ideals. In the words of Schiller "strong custom rends us from each other".

He maintained that what was needed as the human species, faced by grave ecological problems, moved towards the year 2000 AD, was not a fostering of exclusive cultural identity, but a gradual diminution of ethnicity and the emergence of a planetary culture based on scientific understanding and humanistic values.

A first step in this direction was the policy of "ethnic freedom in non-ethnic states", for in such a setting individuals and groups were free to develop their chosen culture while remaining open to broader cultural and political influences.

While other participants agreed that cultural freedom was an important human ideal, provided it did not lead to conflict, they were not generally convinced that it was realistic or desirable to think in terms of a planetary culture.

CULTURE AND TECHNOLOGY

Several ideas were discussed under this heading. The first is that most, if not all, technological choices imply cultural choices, even at quite a simple level. There is a "technological imperative" which sets down methods of use, patterns of work, and therefore systems of education, lifestyles etc. There is, for instance, only one way to run a railroad, and even such a basic technology as a sewer system prompts choices about future housing patterns to a considerable degree. The dictates of the automobile and the tyranny of the telephone are two other obvious examples.

A second and related question was raised by Professor Izumi both in the discussion and in his background paper "Cultural Issues and the Man-Made Environment".

In the complexity of modern cities, the accumulation of technological choices has some very negative effects. For planning purposes, people are more and more dealt with in categories, and are given purely semantic identities; i.e. senior citizens, professionals, unemployed, landed immigrant, ill, student, etc. The labels are arbitrary and symbolic, and the non-symbolizable "ineffable" aspects of man — mostly culturally based — are getting shorter and shorter shrift. How then he asked "should (we) identify, symbolize, classify or conceive of man for the design of man-made environments and the related social decision-making?". And how can such environments permit the development of "a cultural community that respects differences and permits the unfolding of the potential of each..."?

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Another question was: Is it possible to make cultural choices and also achieve technological developments, or are all nations and cultural groups bound to follow one inevitable path? It was suggested that technology can be tehnically interpreted i.e. adapted and redesigned according to national needs, rather than simply being transferred.

None of these fascinating and complex questions could be fully debated or analysed in the time available.

ROLE OF THE PUBLIC AUTHORITIES

The principal issues discussed under this heading were outlined by Professor Jean Burnet in her working paper: Cultural Pluralism, Personal Identity and National Identity (Annex VI). The majority of participants advocated a very considerable decentralisation of decision making, particularly in the area of education and cultural development. They maintained that each cultural group, particularly those minorities whose way of life and world view differs from that of the dominant group, should be allowed to determine their own mode of cultural, social and economic development. This was the concept of the "State as enabler" — opening the way for the optimum development of all the ethnic groups within its boundaries but not setting policy from above for any particular group.

As indicated elsewhere, however, other participants were more concerned with the problems of national integration and were not prepared to see decentralization go too far. They felt there must be some control over the aspirations of various groups in the interests of national integration.

It was pointed out that the problem of state supervision or control of competing cultural groups is a complex one. Total liberty may become the liberty of the strongest, while measures to assure "equality of liberties" can lead to assymetrical results, with certain minority groups receiving a (real or imagined) lion's share of funds and encouragement.

Furthermore all governments are very imperfect instruments. They respond to political pressures and necessities, and generally try for a compromise short-term solution. They cannot be expected to dispense perfect justice. Therefore within any political system minority groups have somehow to acquire the internal organization and then the voice to claim their rights and have their views heard.

For those around the table who represented "the public authorities", one of the major difficulties is the emotional and hostile responses of people to each other and to change. One example cited was a study done in Calgary on How do you feel about Canada, which involved, of course, questions on Quebec separatism. Many of the responses were, unfortunately, neither rational nor constructive. What can be done, to moderate these basic "gut-reactions", so that some dialogue and accommodation is possible? No amount of funding of this cultural programme or that one seems to get at the root of this problem.

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One suggestion was that governments might consider programmes designed to help people analyze themselves (i.e. their cultural groups) and see how they relate to others. The example was given of a minority group which had been subject to discrimination. They decided to try to examine themselves as a group, to see who and what they were, why they might be subject to discrimination and what they wanted within the society.

This suggestion was seen to relate to Dr. Esser's recommendations for "empathy training" for the prerequisite to understanding others is to understand oneself.

There were, however, no suggestions for reasonably short-term solutions to this problem of irrational reactions — particularly by dominant groups or majorities — to the aspirations of other cultural groups or to any change in the established order.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY AND ACTION

As indicated earlier, these suggestions were neither formal nor directed to any specific government or agency (with the exception of one or two where Unesco is mentioned). The group hopes, however, that those interested will follow up and expand on some of these ideas. The greater number of them bear on the general field of education.

Participants were in general of the opinion that education systems are ethnocentric and always represent the past. The complexity of any school system, including teacher training, curricula, materials, physical plants, parental and community expectations etc., makes it inevitably conservative.

Nonetheless they felt that reorientation and "de-ethnicization" are desperately needed to reach the following general goals:

1) It is unhealthy and undesirable for a child to be raised in a condition of cultural insecurity. His education must begin with his native world view. Education must acquaint a child with the history of his particular culture, and valorize it in his eyes.

2) The need for cultural security is accompanied and also countered by the need for cultural coexistence. Education has also the task therefore, of teaching children that cultural variety and difference are normal and commonplace.

3) The predominant fact of the contemporary world is that no existing situation is permanent. Children must therefore be made aware of the constancy of change and in this vital task education presently fails.

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A number of more specific suggestions were made as to how to get multicultural education underway. They implied considerable decentralisation of decision making.

4) Cultural groups and communities should be allowed by the public authorities to make their own decisions on the kind of education they wish for their children. This means of course that the state — in particular ministries of education — must be prepared to relinquish power and allow real decentralisation. The danger here lies in the possibility of falling into fragmentation and "mini-ethnocentrisation". (see rec. No. 6.)

5) It is necessary to study what properties of cultures are to be retained and encouraged, and to develop the educational system accordingly. Those doing the "studying" should include the cultural groups concerned.

6) It is accordingly important to study the needs, motives and perceptions of the beneficiaries of a cultural policy when it is being formulated; the "beneficiaries" themselves should participate in the shaping of the policy.

7) In education (and cultural policies in any field, for that matter) emphasis on ethnicity and racial difference is ultimately damaging, as it makes people see how they do and can differ rather than how they can be nearer. As indicated above, children should learn that cultural difference is normal and commonplace, not divisive.

8) Education authorities might follow up on an educational experiment tried in Peru, in which educational content or curriculum was defined through interaction among three levels of interest 1) child 2) parents 3) the state.

9) The arts are currently used as a means to teach children about other cultures, but generally in a "smattering" and exceedingly ethnocentric way. Artists should be encouraged to devise creative ways of teaching intercultural understanding. Such ideas will, undoubtedly, begin outside the educational system and will require courageous support from funding agencies.

10) In order to provide the necessary "cultural security" a child's early teaching should be in his/her mother tongue. In situations where the official language or linguafranca is other than the child's mother tongue, that language should be introduced very early, so that the child will be able to participate in the wider social milieu.

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11) Like many cultural groups, the working class often fails to identify with the educational system. The result is a very high drop-out rate. Efforts should be made to devise schooling which would reflect the positive values of the working class milieu.

12) Within its concerns about cultural pluralism, Unesco should take account not only of culture as it appears in ethnic traditions, but also of the real nature of social groups including those without access to culture, as reflected in the draft recommendation concerning "the action to ensure that the people at large have free democratic access to culture and participate actively in the cultural life of society".

13) In order to achieve harmony in a pluricultural society, it is important for minority groups to feel that members of the dominant culture care for them. One possible means to this end may be to ask the dominant language group to learn the language of minorities, as is currently being done in India and Sri Lanka.

14) The principle of synergy is vital in understanding intercultural relations and therefore promoting positive communication and interaction between groups. Unesco should therefore hold a series of conferences on synergism.

15) In future work on cultural pluralism synergics conferencing should be tried, i.e. various approaches (artistic, scientific, etc.) to the same topic should be used.

16) Setting aside prejudice and malicious intent, serious misunderstandings do arise when people try to reason together from two different "thought modes" or world views. Research is therefore needed into the problems of cross-cultural communication.

17) The teaching and promotion of empathy is recommended as one way of improving relations among cultural groups. Studies should be made of ways and means of teaching empathy both at the individual and group level, and particularly to young children.

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CULTURAL PLURALISM AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

International meeting held at the Convention Centre,
in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, from June 13-17, 1977

STATEMENT

The following statement was adopted by the meeting during its last working session:

I

1. There is an increasing consciousness of the phenomenon of pluralism and its generality.

2. Pluralism manifests itself in all aspects of life including the demographic, the social and the cultural.

3. It is in the sphere of culture that pluralism is most evident.

4. Cultural pluralism is a phenomenon resulting from the evolution of social consciousness; moreover cultural pluralism is increasingly becoming a matter of conscious choice.

5. This choice implies specific options on the level of the entire community, its constituent parts, and individual members. Cultural pluralism as a political notion implies options open to all members of society.

6. The options should take into account the particular conditions of the country in question.

II

1. A policy of cultural pluralism affects the issue of national identity, which was long considered a basic element of national unity.

2. In the context of cultural pluralism, it would seem preferable to conceive of national identity in terms of union in diversity.

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III

1. Cultural pluralism offers a framework for the full development of human potential, both at the individual and group level. It guarantees the cultural identity and social and cultural security of individuals and groups, while at the same time ensuring the enrichment of human experience and inter-cultural understanding.

2. Cultural identity should not be a simple reflection of the past. Rather it should include elements which encourage the innovative choices on which the improvement of human well being and happiness depends.

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Commission canadienne pour l'Unesco
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CULTURAL PLURALISM AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

AGENDA

1. Nature of cultural pluralism and national identity

The main objective here is to agree on a working definition of cultural pluralism and national identity for the purpose of the meeting.

Papers:

(a) A working definition of culture for the Canadian Commission for Unesco

(b) The nature of cultural pluralism and national identity

(c) Cultural issues and man-made environment.

2. Cultural pluralism in different types of society: problems and solutions

This is meant to provide a quick overview of how cultural pluralism works out in various socio-economic environments, i.e. in industrialized and non-industrialized, rich and poor, old and new, planned and free enterprise societies.

Paper :

Compilation of brief reports on cultural pluralism in the countries of the participants.

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3. Cultural pluralism, personal identity and national identity:

(a) language
(b) education
(c) work
(d) access to means of cultural expression
(e) law.

This is seen as the main item for discussion by the meeting.

Paper:

Cultural pluralism, personal identity and national identity

4. Re-examination of the discussion and of the assumptions put forward at the beginning of the meeting.

5. Role of public authorities and institutions

Recommendations.

The formulation of recommendations is seen as the objective of the discussion since the purpose for organizing the meeting was to attempt to provide some basic guidelines for those who have to make decisions in situations presenting problems of cultural pluralism.

April 25, 1977

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CULTURAL PLURALISM AND NATIONAL IDENTITY/ PLURALISME CULTUREL ET L'IDENTITE NATIONALE

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9/05/78

1(b)

THE NATURE OF CULTURAL PLURALISM AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

by Professor Jerzy A. Wojciechowski
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I

A matter of words?

Cultural pluralism is a relatively new notion. Multiculturalism is even newer. It is so new that it does not appear in The International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences or in The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, both published in the last ten years. Though it did make the pages of the 1975 Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary. The lightning careers of these terms in many countries indicate two things. First of all, there was an obvious need for these words. Second, they point to a situation — and a problem — which is not limited to any one country: it exists in various parts of the world.

While the notions of cultural pluralism and multiculturalism are recent, the phenomenon they express is not. The existence of different cultures within the same geographical region or within the borders of the same state is as old as recorded history. The sudden appearance of these notions is not the result of a drastic change of situation on the demographic level. Rather, it indicates an important development on the intellectual level. It is in fact a measure of the progress in our awareness and sensibility to an old problem. Indeed, the rise in importance of these notions is a clear indication of the evolution of social consciousness on a national and an international scale. This evolution has been prompted by the general progress of knowledge as well as by the development of cultural identity among various groups and the resulting desire to have this identity recognized, respected and preserved. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the subsequent International Convenants on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and on Civil and Political Rights have brought their issues into sharper focus, and have bestowed on them the stamp of international approval of the most important international body, the United Nations.

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We live in an era of the emergence of a universal super-culture based on science, technology and in particular on the mass media, which provide the means for instant, world-wide communications. Parallel to the appearance of a global culture, we are witnessing the development of a world economy. Humanity has reached the stage of species-wide development and interdependence, where trans-national factors exercise a powerful levelling action on individual cultures and societies. At the same time, as if a counterbalance for these homogenizing forces, there is all over the world a revival of ethnicity. It is in this perspective that the problem of cultural pluralism should be viewed and its importance evaluated.

In the emerging situation of world togetherness, it is essential that states share their experience, discuss common problems and help each other find the best possible solution to their problems. The problem of cultural diversity within the borders of one state is a perfect example of an issue which the world community has good reason to explore in the international arena which Unesco provides.

II

On the notion of culture

It is impossible to attempt a serious discussion of cultural pluralism without, first of all, discussing the notion of culture. Not only does the latter underlay the former; there are few notions as important and as obscure as the notion of culture. Culture is one of the most fundamental and universal aspects of human reality. Although its influence is all-pervasive, its nature is so complex and difficult to understand that there is no one generally accepted definition of it. For the purpose of this paper, I shall adopt as a working definition the definition of culture formulated at the request of the Canadian Commission for Unesco by an interdisciplinary committee:

> *"Culture is a dynamic value system of learned elements with assumptions, conventions, beliefs and rules permitting members of a group to relate to each other and to the world, to communicate and to develop their creative potential."*

Culture is essentially a system of and a method for social life based on a hierarchy of values which point out the highest personal and societal aims. It is the human environment as such, the product principally of man's rational faculties and endeavours: it is made to human measure and for man's use. It is superimposed on nature and playing the double role of a shield and of a mediator between man and the universe. In this sense culture is a system of human ecology vital for the existence of the human species. The principal aspects of culture are: totality, organization, distinctness, duration and causality. A culture influences the individual as an individual in his personal and social life, the group which possesses

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the culture as a group, and to various degrees other cultures with which it comes in contact. The impact of culture extends to all aspects of human life: psychological, social and political. It even affects purely intellectual, artistic and economic activity.

The hierarchy of values underlying a culture integrates elements of knowledge into a world view, determines to a large extent attitudes and reactions to life situations, and offers a general framework for man's conscious presence in and relationship to the world. Central to each culture are convictions about the universe and about man, about his nature, his relation to the external world, his place in the universe, the meaning of human life, the supreme values, and the distinction between right and wrong, good and evil.

The sum of these convictions forms in each case a unique and distinctive system, differing from culture to culture, even though some of its elements are similar in different cultures. It is this system which shapes the beliefs, attitudes and behaviour of individuals. Man views himself, the members of the same culture, the members of other cultures and the world in the light of the culturally determined categories of knowledge and valuation. As a result, there is a great variety of opinions on the personality of man, the nature of the universe, space, time, causality, etc. The consequences of this divergence of opinions on these key notions are far-reaching indeed.

It should be pointed out that the hierarchy of values underlying each culture is the principle of internal cohesion of a culture, which bonds the various elements of a culture together and structures them into an organized whole composed of interdependent parts. Culture is a structure which structures man's life. This is why it is so difficult for a person to pass from one culture to another. The process of acculturation is not only complex and slow but, more often than not, painful and fraught with danger for the psychological balance and mental health of the individual. The fact that a culture is a totality, a coherent system, is essential for the proper understanding of its impact on individuals and on society, as well as for an analysis of the problem of cultural pluralism. To better understand the aspect of totality of a culture and of its consequences, let us discuss further the purpose of culture.

The principal aim of culture and its raison d'être is the humanization of man. Culture furthers this aim. It makes possible cooperation among men to improve the quality of life and actualize the human potential by creating conditions necessary for the development of the individual as individual and of the society as a whole. Culture is therefore a dynamic, life-facilitating and life-enhancing factor. Not only does it make possible a fruitful coexistence of individuals but, in so doing, it also brings about the evolution of individuals, societies and mankind. It unites individuals into a group and makes for the cohesion of the group. Consequently, it

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provides the common denominator necessary for effective verbal and emotional communication among persons and assures a certain uniformity of attitudes, beliefs, views of the world and behaviour. The unifying impact of culture introduces a degree of resemblance among members of the group and thereby distinguishes members of one culture from those of other cultures, as well as setting one culture group apart from another. Culture, therefore, produces cohesion within a group, and differentiation outside it: it gives a society its identity and its distinctness.

Culture transcends the individual both in time and in space. It extends to many individuals over a certain area and it lasts through generations. A living culture has always a past, a present, and a future. It is bigger than any person, although person-dependent and person-oriented. It serves as a link with the past and a guide for the future. Unaided by culture, outside its formative influence and its humanizing potential, man is but an animal. Thus, culture is a positive factor producing highly beneficial effects. Unfortunately, it can also be a source of problems for individuals, societies and states alike.

The cultural situation is never simple. Further, the general evolution of mankind produces more and more complex and powerful cultures. This in turn complicates the cultural situation for individuals, societies, states and the whole of mankind. The access to, participation in and profit to be gained from culture is a complex matter. Even in the simplest of situations, within the sphere of one culture, individual inborn capacities, sex, education, social standing and economic situation contribute separately an collectively to produce profound differences in the relations of individuals with the culture. The situation is rendered more complex when two or more cultures are present side by side on the same territory. In this case there exists not only the problem of relation of the individual to the culture of his society but also a host of new problems. These can be grouped under four principal headings: personal relations, i.e., the attitude of members of one culture to those of another culture; the relations between cultures; the impact of the multiplicity of culture on society, and, finally, its impact on the state. No serious discussion of cultural pluralism can avoid dealing with these problems.

Obviously, culture is an essential element in the life of society and must be of concern to a country. The progress of mankind is expressed in, and can be measured by, the progress of culture and of our preoccupation with it. As a product of man's creativity, culture is an evergrowing component of the human environment which exercises a growing influence on man. This means that culture becomes an increasingly more important factor on the national and international scene. Therefore, it should be of prime concern to everybody interested in the common good, especially to politicians and should occupy an ever greater part in the discussion of national aims and international relations.

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III

Cultural pluralism

There is a growing concern about cultural pluralism because it is a source of increasingly grievous problems. Although the problems are quite visible, the notion of cultural pluralism is not obvious or easy to understand. "Cultural pluralism" may mean different things. It may denote a demographic fact, an aim, i.e., an ideal, an explicit policy. The basic fact here is the existence within a social and political structure of groups belonging to different cultures. This is usually a source of difficulties. Culture is the specifically human environment which is always a particular, determined totality different from other cultures. The culture with which one identifies is recognized as natural, obvious and good. Other cultures are therefore perceived as unfamiliar, not to say alien, and somewhat odd if not altogether wrong. Members of other cultures are outsiders, different from members of one's own culture, foreign and, at least potentially, enemies. Peaceful coexistence, not to mention cooperation with them, demands a considerable effort of goodwill, understanding and compromise. This is always difficult, and is a source of complicated and growing problems.

In view of these problems, there arises the need of improving the relations between culturally diverse groups within the same state as well as between states. The discrepancy between the existing situation and the desirable state of affairs leads to the notion of an ideal solution of a complicated cultural situation. Cultural pluralism understood as an aim thus expresses the optimal cultural, social and political solution, which may be envisaged and desired for a culturally complex society. The optimal solution is, at the best, only an aim. Important as ideals may be, they do not of themselves bring about the desired changes. The striving for the ideal must therefore take the form of a more or less articulated cultural, social and political program for effective implementation of the ideal. This plan must eventually be realized in an actual policy of cultural pluralism.

To be effective, programs and policies must be adapted to existing situations. Depending on the case, cultural diversity may be an old fact, or a recent one. It may represent a fairly stable or a changing situation. India, for instance, may serve as an example of an old and stable culturally complex situation. Canada, on the other hand, presents a relatively recent and constantly changing culturally complex scene. Although the general aim of cultural pluralism may be assumed as always being the same, the problems which arise from the concrete situation may differ quite considerably from case to case. An adequate study of these problems would require a detailed analysis of the existing situations. The size of this paper obliges us to limit ourselves to a general discussion of those aspects of the problem which are present in each case.

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The good of a country, and of mankind as a whole, demands not only a sound economy but also a sound cultural situation. The greater the cultural predicament the more rational should be the response to the problem — that is, the greater becomes the need of an adequate comprehension of the situation, of careful planning and appropriate policies. The political acts of planning in the field of culture, and of implementing the plan, are more difficult, complex and dangerous than comparable acts in the economic field. The reason is that one is dealing with intangible values, personal attitudes and achievements. Here more than elsewhere the question of the relation between the good of the individual and the common good comes to the fore. Cultural policy is more complicated than other kinds of policy because culture cannot be commanded. Culture is not a regiment, it does not obey orders. Highhanded treatment of culture and of cultural relations produces, as a rule, adverse effects: it is simply counter-productive.

To understand the temptations of arbitrary solutions of culturally complex situations, it is essential to consider the organization in the name of which these solutions are attempted — the state. A state is a structure, an integrated whole, i.e., a system. This fact has far-reaching consequences for cultural pluralism. The condition or the viability of a system as a system is more fundamental and more general than the question of relations between culturally diverse groups within a state. A system, especially a dynamic system, requires a harmonious cooperation of all elements of the system. The universal rule suffers no exceptions, and is as valid in the life of a social organism as it is in the life of a biological organism. It is well known that to persist and develop in a situation which is always highly competitive, the state needs efficient organization and the effective collaboration of its citizens on all levels of national life. Individuals must cooperate with individuals, with the society as a whole, and with the state and its various organs. There is no society and no state without a reasonable degree of internal and external unity. Economic progress and the rapidly growing needs of the exploding world population increasingly demand more efficient organization of societies and production of goods. This results in the trend toward larger and more powerful economic and political units such as the European Common Market. It is in the light of this set of conditions of national and international existence that the discussion of cultural pluralism should be conducted in order to be realistic and achieve meaningful results.

There are similarities and differences between culture and state. Culture, too, is the product of a group, and, as we said earlier, gives the group its homogeneity, its coherence and its distinctness. This is why a culture may be either an ally or a foe of a state. To the extent that the culture group has its distinctness, it forms a unit and has its proper interests and aims. The state also is a unit which has definite and manifest aims and interests. If the interests and aims of these two units do not coincide, conflict arises between the two entities. This is usually the case in pluricultural states, especially when the state is to some degree identified with a dominant culture. The ensuing situation is

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damaging to all concerned. The first to suffer is the minority group. It is the most obvious victim, but it is not the only loser. In the long run, the state and the majority group suffer too, because the internal unity of the state is affected and much energy is lost in intergroup controversies which could otherwise be used in more creative personal and civic endeavours. This is the unavoidable consequence of inadequate solutions to culturally complex problems. It is essential for the proper understanding of the whole issue of cultural pluralism that this consequence be perceived and its importance appreciated.

As far as society is concerned the problems which cultural multiplicity creates concern not only its political form, i.e., the state, and the associated aspects of cohesion, structure and cooperation between cultural groups. The manner in which the problem of relations between cultural groups is solved has direct bearing on the general dynamism of the society, its creativity, originality, authenticity, distinctness and national identity. The state, as a political structure, is obviously affected by the cultural complexity of the population. The impact of this complexity on the state, on the type of government it has, as well as the attitude of the government to the situation, is a source of some of the most difficult practical and theoretical problems to be found in the field of social and political theory and practice. In light of what has been said, we can give a broad definition of cultural pluralism as an aim. Generally speaking, cultural pluralism is a cultural, social and political system assuring the best chance of full development and of satisfaction of aspirations to all elements constituting the state: the individuals, the cultural groups and the state itself. In other words, it is a system allowing individuals and groups to develop freely, to partake in and contribute to the life of the state in all its aspects, and to do this uncoerced and to their full ability. There must be a two-way relationship, a give and take, between culture groups and also between them and the state. It is essential that the state be perceived by all culture groups as their common property and that it be their common concern. Culture groups should be equal partners in a joint venture. Every citizen and each group should be able to identify with the state and with the whole nation freely, convinced of the advantages of such identification, and without being obliged to suppress his or its cultural identity.

Active participation in the affairs of state and concern for the common good are essential conditions in realizing the ideal of cultural pluralism. The greatest danger facing a multicultural society is lack of intergroup communication, lack of active participation of cultural groups in national life, in short, the ghetto mentality. Ghettos were a way of preserving cultural heritage and identity. In the past, in situations of slow cultural change, limited communications and rudimentary states, ghettos were possible and beneficial for the culture groups in question. Today in a world fast becoming a global village, in face of the explosive progress of knowledge and of conditions of life, ghettos are no longer advantageous and hardly possible. The ideal of cultural pluralism is a much more difficult

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model of organization of pluricultural society than the ghetto alternative. But it is the only solution which satisfies the condition of social justice and offers a chance of development and of staying in the race to all cultural groups concerned.

The ideal of cultural pluralism presupposes a more fundamental notion without which it would be meaningless and unjustified, namely the idea of a person, the ultimate subject of all social structures, policies and rights. To give any meaning to the discussion of cultural pluralism, it is essential to recognize the basic value of the individual as a person, his fundamental rights to happiness, to cultural and political freedom, and respect for his cultural identity. Without this recognition a discussion of the ideal of cultural pluralism would be a sham.

National identity like participation in a culture is a complex phenomenon and a difficult problem. Broadly speaking it may mean an objective legal and political fact attested by citizenship, or it may express a subjective fact, that is, the identification of the person with the nation and/or with the state. The two are far from being identical or going hand in hand. This identification like love cannot be commanded, it must be freely achieved. This is especially true in the case of multinational or multicultural states. To be genuine and meaningful, the act of identification must be advantageous to the individual and to the state. It is the state as the stronger partner that ought to facilitate this act for the individual. When the individual feels well in the state, when he knows that he is respected and appreciated irrespective of his cultural characteristics, and that he can contribute to the commonweal, then his national identity is no problem for him or for the state, whatever the cultural complexity of the population.

The goal of cultural pluralism may seem far-fetched and unrealistic to practically minded politicians and bureaucrats. But to almost everybody not long ago the desire to reach the moon seemed far-fetched and unrealistic. Ours is a time of rapid change and fulfilment of age-old dreams. We were reaching for the moon and we have reached the moon. Many question the value of this achievement. And yet, unprofitable as it may seem now, the moon landing opens a new era of human history and points out the direction of expansion for mankind of tomorrow.

There is an analogy between the space odysseys and our earthly efforts to build multicultural just societies, of which the Conference on Cultural Pluralism and National Identity is a result, an instance and a symbol. Both the moon flights and our terrestrial movements are experiments in the true sense of the word. They deal with areas which are largely still unknown or, at best, partially explored. The outcome cannot be predicted with certainty, and there is an element of risk involved. The stakes are high and the potential benefits enormous. Both experiments are explorations

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in space, whether planetary or social space. In the former the distances are measured in physical units, in the latter in degrees of otherness, fear, prejudice and ignorance. In both spaces the points of departure and arrival are remote from each other and enormous energies are necessary to overcome the distances. Culture groups, like planets, seem to be separated by vast expanses of void. May this conference contribute to the efforts to fill this void with the human values of understanding, mutual respect and a will to bring all men together. Mankind will have a future or not, depending on its ability to devise more adequate models of society than those we have known until now.

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CULTURAL ISSUES AND MAN-MADE ENVIRONMENT

by Professor Kiyo Izumi
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"More serious than "despiritualization of nature," although perhaps related to it, is the fact of unavailability of non-superficial human relationships, and disinvolvement with significant others in modern urban life." 1

Cities, the largest of man-made environments, have always assumed a dominant role in cultural issues. Each city of the past embodied a unique local culture, reflected in many ways. Physically, this uniqueness is seen in the architecture and street patterns of cities which have been preserved and maintained; archeological excavations also reveal it in those that have perished. As specialization developed and facilitated commerce, and thus a more interdependent world began to evolve, this uniqueness began to exhibit a similarity of environmental designs. More recently, to accommodate an accelerating population increase, entire new cities are built, and old cities are rebuilt and major additions made. These reveal the universal appeal of the logic and results of science, technology, industrialization and the accompanying economic rationale for planning these environments. The physical distinctiveness reflecting any unique culture is now increasingly subsumed, as a certain universality of urban form becomes pervasive throughout the world.

Among the more easily perceived similarities are the means of transportation, mass and individual, in which the ubiquitous private automobile begins to dominate by its peculiar universal appeal and the inordinate amount and types of space allocated for its use, a major factor in dictating urban landscape. Mass production and related machine techniques in construction and servicing also dictate a multitude of designs of man-made environments from street lighting to the undistinguished high-rise.

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In any art there is unlimited potential for creative differences, even within a medium. But it is evident that the culture of science, technology, and industrialization is becoming universal in its sameness in our man-made environments throughout the world.[2]

More important to this discussion is the fact that urbanization brings together ever greater numbers of diverse peoples of a region, in increasingly intimate proximity, in one place and time. Coupled with rapid transportation and the growth of the electronic media, urbanization also permits other peoples, not only from the hinterland but also from remote corners of the entire world, to interact more directly with the larger numbers of people in our cities. Since many significant cultural and other differences in ourselves, and between ourselves and others, are more clearly revealed when we are closer together (though closeness does not necessarily lead to greater understanding), urbanization may be the singularly significant process that affects culture.

The development and application of science and technology, and their many accompanying socioeconomic rationales and procedures for the planning of man-made environments, in themselves reflect profound cultural changes in attitudes and values in the countries in which these originated and in those that adopt or adapt them. In some instances, the effects are not only dramatic but may also be traumatic — as, for example, the situation of the "untouchables" in the building of the city of Chandigarh in India. The installation of a water-borne sewage disposal system (an application of a scientifically based technology) in this city made a whole class of people, in effect, dispensible. This outcome, through the application of a technology that requires an inordinate amount of water in a water-short environment, raises fundamental questions. In spite of the admittedly humane notion of preventing disease, in this instance, such planning decisions now need to be examined in the context of a more inclusive (ecological) concept of health.[3]

The list of effects of such forms of man-made environments for good or bad, in terms of a more inclusive cultural context, has yet to be compiled, as the limited rationality of fiscal economic assessment continues to prevail.[4] Besides, such an evaluative appreciation requires comprehension of the more complex issue of the form of global culture and model of man that is crucial to his survival in terms of the more universal issues of man and/as his environment. Urbanization may provide a significant arena for this examination: the essential proximity of a diversity of people in a city should help clarify cultural differences and issues and, it is hoped, lead to greater tolerance, if not understanding.

Hence it is important that we begin to understand not only the forces that bring people together through urbanization, but also, and equally important, how people are brought together and arranged in space and time in these man-made environments which are slowly becoming

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uniformally similar throughout the world. As it is expected that other parts of this conference will discuss the more symbolic cultural issues, I propose in this paper to address the more space-and-time-bound intimate cultural issues. These are the more personal and invisible cultural ways which, at the behavioural level, develop through prolonged uninterrupted interaction among a people, through several generations, in a familiar and seemingly unchanging and stable environment where there is meaningful spontaneous intercourse.

The tentative evidence in those cities/countries where the culture of science, technology, and industrialization now dominate is that the new man-made environments are increasingly inhibitive, and even prohibitive, of such spontaneous human relationships. This is the consequence of a belief in the efficacy of specialization — which, it is believed, can be applied anywhere, anytime, to anything — coupled with exclusive (and divisive) concepts of economies of scale and administrative efficiency. This tendency to specialize is, of course, as old as man's awareness of his differences from others, and it undoubtedly played an important part in bringing people together in the first place. However, the scope of the application of specialization today knows no boundaries: as it occurs in urbanization it is the result of the extensive and intensive application of science, technology, industrialization and their accompanying socioeconomic techniques, which in themselves are the results of specialization.

One can appreciate the division of roles and responsibilities based on differences in competence and skills, and the application of these in special places and time. But even today, many of these specializations can obtain only in an environment that has the qualities and characteristics essential to the application of the specific skills and competencies. Many of these are basic to the means of life - such as food production, where the farmer's skill and competence are best used on land that is suited to the growing of food. Many skills and competencies intrinsic to industrialization are applied in special environments, designed and built for these purposes, located conveniently for industry's own complex reasons, and made possible by the potential of the techniques of transportation, energy distribution, and communication.

Here we discover an ironic paradox, which illustrates the divisive and exclusive notions of economies of scale if they are applied independently to each separate enterprise. Presumably, the combined potential of the distribution networks of communication, energy, and transportation could free mankind from space and time so that, except for a few, none of us would have to live at a particular place and time to assure subsistence, and that more of us could live where and with whom we like in our individual search for the meaning of life.[5]

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But each of these networks (along with other enterprises), bent on independent economic efficacies, demand larger concentrations of people and thus create inefficiencies in the other enterprises, through a space-time distribution of people, things and places, to maximize a greater consumption of each.[6]

In the new man-made environments of our cites it is not only similar major activities, functions, and related means to provide the basics of living that are segregated in increasingly larger concentrations. We also see agglomerations of places for play, relaxation, learning, healing, etc., in the name of administrative and economic efficiencies of utilities, services, and personnel, the latter considered as merely dehumanized components of a system. The many cost-benefit studies to validate these concentrations on the basis of economies of scale consider the cost incurred by the individual as external. The cumulative costs to individuals are then considered as maximizing the income of the various other enterprises. These enterprises deliberately separate people's places of work, play, learning, healing, marketing, etc., to which they must have access, from their homes, to necessitate more frequent use of their respective services.

As a consequence, the way in which we build our urban areas today is, collectively, the single most wasteful use of irreplacable land, irrecoverable time and other resources, and is the major direct and indirect cause of pollution and environmental damage.

But the degree of specialization does not stop simply in terms of activities and functions and the special environments for them. Any differentiation of man is now the basis for deciding on the use and occupancy of cities. In more "advanced" urban planning and designs, any classification of people (presumably derived for the purpose of understanding man), not only a social group such as the family, is assumed to be legitimate in deciding who lives where, under what conditions, with whom, for how long, and when. The list of human identifications includes not only those differences in age, sex, and birthplace, over which none of us have control. It also includes any attribute, acquired accidently or imposed — auch as widow, widower, divorcee, single, married, single-parent, student, unwed mother, childless couple, parentless child, retired, semi-retired, welfare recipient, unrelated, and so on, ad infinitum. It is assumed that these singular identifications represent or embody the totality of the person so designated, usually based on the application of some "scientifically" approved methodology of quantitative analysis and statistical probability.

The cumulative effect of all this is an excessive differentiation of space, with ever larger concentrations of things and people, each for a specific purpose, function, and activity, and also for individual social relationships, behaviour and states of being. It is not only the computed but also the imputed economic and administrative efficiencies that are at work here, as we proceed further to differentiate

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characteristics and qualities of concepts such as health (disease, illness, sick and dying roles, etc.) and leisure (play, recreation, meditation, contemplation), based on arbitrarily established criteria for the quantitative comparative measuring of subjective qualitative experiences. No form of human differentiation that our semantic imagination can conceive is now safe from being used as a basis for deciding use and occupancy of space in the new man-made environments. Even the meaning of life is a subject for scientific analysis for political, legal, economic, and other social evaluations in the name of a variety of fragmented concepts of efficiency.

This precise correlation of classifications of people to behaviour, activities, purposes, etc., and to space and time, is the basis for the new man-made environments. The burgeoning "science" of the study of man-environment relationships, — which is variously known as architectural and environmental sciences and is coupled with a variety of established social sciences and related disciplines such as psychology, sociology and anthropology, of which a large component is aggregated as environmental design research — is now a major force in shaping the culture of man-made environments as seen in urbanization.[7]

The human consequences are that more of us spend more time being transported from place to place, faced with meeting and dealing with more and more strangers, even antagonists, in unfamiliar and even hostile environments. We spend more time trying to be spontaneous as we are required to schedule our time more precisely, more frequently, and further into the future. We are left little time for those "non-superficial human relationships" and "involvement with significant others," to participate in that essential profusion of seemingly purposeless but meaningful encounters.

In such man-made environments, cultural differences at the day-to-day experiential level are difficult to nurture and sustain. The pressures to conform, to synchronize with urban space and time at every level of one's personal life, leave little time and opportunity to cultivate individual and group uniqueness. The sheer physical proximity of diverse people, who only share some administratively imposed identity in ever higher densities, does not permit those more overt social relationships, behaviours and activities that are intrinsic to significant cultural differences. This same proximity has, through experience, made necessary a variety of rules and regulations in our cities. Any involvement or intrusion may bring to bear legal sanctions, liabilities and accountabilities, which not only inhibit but often prohibit many forms of group and individual expressions and displays of unique cultural traits and modes of behaviour.

Since it becomes increasingly difficult to behave in culturally different ways at the non-verbal level, people begin to turn to more symbolic means to assert these differences. Some of these, such as language, exclude the participation of others and simply drive in the

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wedge further between different people. Basic to the understanding and sharing of differences beyond the non-verbal level is the need for a common means of communication, recognizing that to more completely understand another culture one must know its language.

I have discussed what I perceive to be some dominating negative consequences of our man-made environments in cultural considerations at the behavioural level. I have suggested that these are the results of the (mis)application of science, technology, industrialization and the derivative social techniques, particularly in the identification of people for the use and occupancy of man-made space. As experience shows, when peoples of different cultures are together in the same space and time, under the conditions discussed, more often than not the result is conflict.

Hence, a major planning issue, and therefore a cultural one, is the question of how we should identify, symbolize, classify, or conceive of man for the design of man-made environments and the related social decision-making. Further, what are those spatial characteristics and relationships, the arrangement of people, physically in space and time, that will permit the essential condition of being "a part and yet apart," to develop a cultural community that respects differences and permits the unfolding of the potential of each — all this in the context of a growing urban population, and of shortages and limits of all varieties of material resources.

I began with a quote, a statement by Dr. Shashi Pande, a psychiatrist, who brings together the wisdom and philosophy of India, the humanities and psychology of Europe, the neuro sciences of America, melded with his own humanness, as the theme for my discussion.

Let me end with another quote, to respectfully suggest yet another cultural frame of reference for your questions, and, I hope, answers to mine. It is a translation of a Japanese Haiku and it reads,

> *"Everything is symbolic, everything is holy. There is no special time or place or person, privileged to represent the rest. And then democracy can begin. The many are made one when the totality is in every part. When one thing is taken up, all things are taken up with it. One flower is the spring. It is there all the time."*[8]

Footnotes and References

1. Shashi K. Pande, "From Hurried Habitability to Heightened Habitability," Henry Phipps Psychiatric Clinic, The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Position paper prepared for the First National Symposium on Habitability, Los Angeles, California, May 11-14, 1970.

2. As one world traveller has told me, he is amazed at the monotony arising from the uniformity within the dissimilarities of environments, from one country to another, wherever technology and industrialization have touched the places he has visited. It is not simply the ubiquitous Coca Cola signs or the Hilton Hotels. He has been most affected by total perceptual effects of the various parts of the cities, particularly the new residential areas, regardless of flora, terrain, climate, and other basic environmental differences.

3. In Japan, when there was an all-pervasive immediate environmental relationship between villages, towns, and even cities, with the ubiquitous vegetable gardens, "night soil" to the "last drop" was gathered and used as fertilizer. As modern sewer systems were installed, in the name of health, these immediate sources of fresh food began to cost more and quality declined; in some cases fresh food even became scarce. In addition, there were many adjustments that many people who depended on such agricultural economics had to make. While it may be shown that some disease and illness were caused by the above type of agricultural technique, the evidence is that this was caused mostly through carelessness. As some observant people have stated, Japan has substituted smog, mercury poisoning, and the pollution of the seas around it.

4. A beginning to analyzing the impact of technology on society has been made, but this is still in terms of specific projects and limited themes. However, some of these are insightful and significant. I cite only three. See, Technology and Social Change, eds, H. Russell Bernard and Pertti Pelto, The MacMillan Company, 1972; People in the Way, by James W. Wilson, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1973, and "The Pernicious Effects of Development," by George N. Appell, in Fields within Fields within Fields, The World Institute Council, New York.

5. The economics of telecommunications is a paradox in social terms. For example, telephone services were not available until people were concentrated together in close physical proximity. When telephone services were provided, it was found that close to 100 per cent of the calls were within the concentrated area. This is not to deny the validity of such an amenity for a variety of purposes, such as for commerce, and to ameliorate the situation of disabled people. But there is no denying that many people who are close together physically become separated when provided with telephones.

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6. For example, the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) has stated that if its system is to become economically viable, Toronto should be planned so there are greater concentrations of specialized functions at the "nodal" points — meaning stop stations spaced in terms of economic cost of passenger distance calculated on the basis of fuel costs, speed, and time — so that the maximum numbers of people can be transported at minimum cost to the enterprise. The users' economic costs, time, and social costs are, of course, externalities.

7. It is interesting to note a statement, in the introduction to a study, which says, "It is the avowed intention of human ecology, and this journal, to become increasingly scientific and develop more conclusive evidence on the relations between health and well-being and major environmental and related population characteristic factors," and in the summary, "prospectively collected effect parameters of health, happiness, and housing preferences could be subjected in Tapiola to uniquely well-controlled factorial analysis with regard to single actions and interactions of income, educational, occupational, and social class; internal (housing unit) population density; housing type; and past community and housing experience — factors which vary widely and largely independently and at 'fine grain' through the town." from, "Tapiola: A Unique Experimental Design Separating Socioeconomic Class from Housing and Community Environmental Factors in Health and Well-being. A Methodological Note," by M. Lawrence Heideman Jr., in Urban Ecology, Vol. 2, no. 1, May, 1976, Elsevier Scientific Publishing Company.

8. Cf. Blythe, Haiku, I viii. See also Norman O. Brown, Love's Body, Random House, 1966, p. 239.

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CULTURAL PLURALISM, PERSONAL IDENTITY AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

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The most poignant issues in Canada today concern the relationship of cultural pluralism to the person and to the state. The question of the constitutional arrangements and the public policies necessary for survival of the state, always serious, is now desperate. Other plural societies have faced and are facing the same question, and their answers may assist Canada in finding its own answer. In this paper I shall try to suggest some of the key problems that arise in culturally plural societies in language, education, work, access to cultural expression, and the law.

Culturally plural societies vary in many respects, and these must be kept in mind in comparing them. They vary in the number of groups involved and the degrees of cultural difference between them; the extent to which the various groups are geographically concentrated or dispersed and the length of time they have been in the territory; the size of the groups, whether they are increasing, stable, or decreasing, and the proportions they bear to the total population; whether the groups constitute distinct peoples or consider themselves only parts of peoples, and in the latter instance whether the rest are near or far; the degree of ethnic awareness and capacity for collective action of the groups; the affluence of the society, its stage of development, its forms of political organization and its ideologies. All of these factors, and the list is not exhaustive, may affect the influence of pluralism on individuals and on the society. They cannot be discussed here, but their importance must be kept in mind.

Whether it is possible for a plural society to have unity and a distinct identity has been questioned. Whether it is possible to build unity and identity not upon two, three or four cultural groups but upon an indefinite and changing number has been questioned even more (cf. Rocher 1973). However, the fact that the model of a nation-state homogeneous in ethnicity, language and culture has never been attained and that every modern state is to a greater or less degree culturally plural may be sufficient answer. What institutions must be common to all members of the society and what institutions groups may be free to maintain solely or

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particularly for their own members, if unity and identity are to be preserved, become important issues. Equality, a widely accepted value, also becomes important. It may be asked whether equality among diverse groups is possible: neither of the two radical prescriptions, total indifference to ethnic and cultural variations or insistence on proportional representation of cultural groups (quotas) in some or all areas of life, seems satisfactorily to secure it (Glazer 1975).

Language

In pre-industrial society, linguistic pluralism was of little significance (Simon 1975:3-5). Industrialization and almost universal literacy have changed the situation. Now many groups cherish their language as the dearest symbol of their identity.

For the individual, it is important whether his mother tongue is employed in all domains. If not, he must add to his verbal repertoire (Gumperz 1971) or run the risk that his abilities will be insufficiently used (Brazeau 1958). Thus the sense of worth and dignity of the individual are involved. For those whose mother tongue is not employed in all domains, it becomes crucial that there be opportunities to learn other languages and, as a corollary, to maintain or acquire the language of their forebears (O'Bryan, Reitz and Kuplowska 1976).

This, of course, relates to the connections between language and culture. It is often assumed that the connections are indissoluble, that is, that neither language nor culture can survive without the other (Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism 1967; Canadian Consultative Council on Multiculturalism 1975). However, important cultural differences can exist without significant linguistic differences, and the converse. A language also serves many functions, and may be more important for cultural survival in some groups than in others.

Many people speak a variety of their language which is remote from the standard variety. It is necessary to ask therefore whether the regional or class dialects are respected or scorned within the ethnic group itself and within the larger community, and whether the varieties of speech actually used by members of the ethnic group or the standard variety are transmitted in education programs and the print and broadcast media. If the standard variety receives state support, some cultural differences may be obliterated. The significance of the existence of varieties of language for cultural maintenance and group unity needs to be explored. For example, it is possible that a linguistic gulf may exist between the intellectuals within the ethnic group and some or all of the rank and file (Rocher 1973); this is, of course, only one illustration of the complex relations between language and social class (Mackey 1967; Simon 1975).

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For the state, questions arise such as whether there is a single lingua franca or whether two or more languages have equal status; whether the lingua franca, if there is one, is the ancestral tongue of one of the constituent groups in the society or of a former colonial power; what the domains are of the various languages current in the society; whether the languages are world languages, and if so whether their status is rising or declining; to what extent the maintenance of languages other than the predominant ones is supported by the state and to what extent left to the family and the ethnic group; to what extent such languages are used to maintain cultural differences and structural separation; to what extent they contribute to unequal participation of members of various groups in economic, political, social and cultural life, and to what extent linguistic policy can and should respond to changes in the society's linguistic composition. The costs of multilingualism are an important consideration; so too are the rivalries and antagonisms among linguistic groups. Against these must be weighed the benefits of multilingualism, often neglected or underestimated because they are hard to measure.

Education

Education is intimately related to language and culture. The specific teaching about cultural pluralism that is done in the schools is significant for the child's self-image and for his attitudes to others and to his country, whether he belongs to a dominant or a subordinate group. Some specific teaching may have effects contrary to what are intended, however, depending on the context in which it is done (Troper 1976). The language or languages of instruction in the schools, the languages taught as subjects, the culture or cultures permeating the environments of the schools, the culture or cultures formally taught, and the role models presented by teachers and supervisors in the education system or systems of the society all have strong impact. So too do access to education and costs of education. Schools generally transmit to succeeding generations the skills and information considered basic in the society; they also sift and sort in accordance with certain values of the society. Among the important issues are whether all members of a culturally plural society have equal chances within the education system; whether laws and procedures designed to ensure equality in fact do so (Glazer 1975), and to what extent and to what effect structural separation of members of various cultural groups exists within schools.

The different systems of education, the means of coordinating them and the ideologies upon which they are based — both in the curriculum and in classroom practice — are of crucial importance in defining national identity. In a culturally plural society, it is one thing to regard differences as obstacles to be overcome and quite another to regard them as assets to be cherished. If the latter point of view is adopted, it matters more that the roles of all cultural groups in the history and structure of the society are included in the textbooks of schools than that they are extolled in the speeches of politicians. It also matters how the roles of the cultural groups are presented, whether in such a fashion as to

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increase the understanding of students and to engage their imagination and sympathy, or in such a fashion as to confuse and repel or — more probably — bore them; the conception that the youth hold of themselves and their country, and the ardour with which they hold and promote it, are important aspects of national identity. Much is often made of the rights of parents in the education of their children. What those rights are, and how they are reconciled with the rights of the child, the ethnic group and the society can become agonizing issues in certain situations. If there is both a public school system and a variety of private systems of education, with the former viewed as having a special mission in fostering national unity and national identity, the question arises how the public school system can be safeguarded.

Work

"Cultures ... differ in nothing more than in the skills, work habits, and goals which they instil into the individual." (Hughes and Hughes 1952, p. 64). Hence such questions arise as to what extent the various ethnic groups in a culturally plural society constitute separate occupational systems and participate differentially in a common structure; how this affects the distribution of prestige, power, and income; how it affects the vitality and adequacy and the maintenance of minority languages (Brazeau 1958), and what stereotypes are developed about the abilities and skills of the various groups.

For the individual in the modern world, his work gives him his most important status. The use of his skills and abilities is bound up with his self-image; so too is his income, since this represents an assessment of his achievement and affects his chances for further achievement. To what extent the educational aspirations, work habits and goals of his group are recognized and rewarded, what means exist for him to combat stereotypes and move up within his cultural group or the broader occupational hierarchy are among the questions posed for him. The careers of those whose work involves language are profoundly affected by linguistic policies and practices, and in industrial and post-industrial societies a high proportion of jobs, especially managerial and selling jobs, involve language.

From the point of view of the state, as full use as possible of the skills of all groups is desirable for the prosperity and harmony of the country. The question of equality also presents itself: if members of different groups contribute differentially to a complex division of labour, the role of the state in coordinating effort and distributing rewards becomes crucial. It can be asked, for example, what state control is appropriate for trade unions and professional associations, which on occasion limit the access of members of some racial and ethnic groups to certain occupations.

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Access to means of cultural expression

Access to means of cultural expression is intimately linked to language and to education; it is also in modern societies related to the mass media of communication. In a culturally plural society the linguistic and educational rights of the component groups are vital to the access to means of cultural expression of individuals. So too is the class position of members of the component groups.

For the individual it is important that he have freedom to express not simply the culture of his ancestral group but whatever culture he has made his own, whether it be that of his forebears or another. He must also have freedom to choose the language or other medium of cultural expression, since this implies a choice of audience. Pressures from the ethnic group as well as from the larger society may have to be withstood. Most important, however, both for the individual and the state is the question of creativity. How best to release creativity in individuals is crucial for the emergence of a distinctive national identity in any plural society. It has been argued that creation requires immersion in the person's ancestral culture. However, since creation is the combination of elements not previously brought together, it is evident that cultural interchange is also essential. Certainly for the larger society to benefit from the creative activity of members of ethnic groups cultural interchange must take place.

The giants in the field of the mass media of communication, especially the United States, create problems of access to cultural expression for all those states that are dependent on them, particularly those that share the language of the giants and are geographically close to them. The problem of cultural expression for the dominant group or groups in such states is acute, and hence the problem of creating and maintaining a distinctive national identity. Even more is the problem acute for a society with a policy of multiculturalism, or for minority groups within a culturally plural society. How limited resources, whether they be money or television channels, are to be allotted, how flexibility is to be maintained in such allotment; what the interests of the cultural communities, government bodies, and the general public in the media are, and how they are to be coordinated; what the balance should be between publicly and privately controlled systems — these are among the problems, and they are crucial to national identity.

Law

In the Western world law is organized territorially. In a culturally plural society, some people must live under a system of law alien to them. Sometimes those who do so are natives who have been conquered, sometimes they are immigrants; learning what the law is, so they do not unwittingly violate it and will know their rights under it, is then necessary. Individuals may have to win the right to be recognized by the law, in order to be able to

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claim basic human rights and to bring complaints against members of other cultural groups in the society. That right attained, they may proceed to struggle for the right to maintain the cultural differences they value (de Meyer 1975), to be protected against group defamation, and to change the law to more nearly embody their conceptions. Their success will be related to, among other things, the weight given in the society to individual and collective rights, which varies widely from one society to another.

For the state, the degree of recognition to be given under law to various cultural groups must be a matter of policy: the range of variation is from no recognition at all of collective rights to a fairly high degree of autonomy for cultural groups, and from protection against violation of rights to active moral and financial support for cultural maintenance and development. The kind of rights recognized, whether simply cultural rights narrowly defined or economic rights as well, and the degree of entrenchment, whether in the constitution, statutes, or common law, are other variables. Not only the letter of the law but also the manner in which it is interpreted is of course important. There is also to be considered the relation between public opinion and law. The extent to which law can influence public opinion and the circumstances in which it can do so; the extent to which law in general is weakened by particular laws that are unenforceable or considered unjust; the extent to which laws may have effects contrary to those intended, either because of inadequate drafting or changing circumstances; whether special protection or special status in law is compatible with equality — these are among the issues to be considered.

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